

Don't Let Your Lungs Go To Pot

- ◆ **Smoking marijuana can lead to abnormal functioning of lung tissue injured or destroyed by marijuana smoke.**

Someone who smokes marijuana regularly may have many of the same respiratory problems as tobacco smokers. These individuals may have daily cough and phlegm, symptoms of chronic bronchitis, and more frequent chest colds.

- ◆ **Regardless of the THC content, the amount of tar inhaled by marijuana smokers and the level of carbon monoxide absorbed are three to five times greater than among tobacco smokers.**

This may be because marijuana users inhale more deeply and hold the smoke in the lungs and because marijuana smoke is unfiltered.

- ◆ **Smoking any substance--including marijuana--increases the risk of developing bacterial pneumonia and other infections of the lungs.**

- ◆ **Smoking marijuana appears to damage or paralyze the cilia, the hair-like projections in the lungs that sweep out microbes and other matter that can cause disease.**

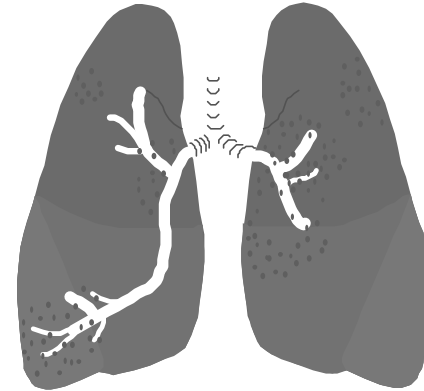
Damaging the lung's cilia, the respiratory system's first line of defense, can have severe consequences for people with weak immune systems.

- ◆ **Among smokers of both marijuana and tobacco, it appears that the effects of marijuana add to the damaging effects of tobacco, and vice versa.**

The damage to the ciliated cells in the lining of the airways caused by smoking tobacco and/or marijuana weakens the ability of the lungs to remove inhaled particles, making the lungs more vulnerable to infection.

- ◆ **Smoking marijuana can cause precancerous changes in lung tissue similar to those seen in cigarette smokers.**

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